

REFERENCES

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8. STUDY ON THE STOMACH CONTENTS OF COMMON BAYA, *PLOCEUS PHILIPPINUS* (LINNAEUS)

While studying the stomach-contents of the Common Baya (56 adults and 80 chicks) in the paddy cultivating area, of Orissa and West Bengal, the following observations on the food of the birds were made :

In the case of very young chicks (3 to 6 days), the stomach-contents consisted mainly of weed seeds (Graminae) and a number of minute stone chips. In some cases, a few broken mollusc-shells were also found. As the chicks grew up (7 to 10 days) a change of food was also noticed. The contents were mostly insect fragments. With development, the intake of mollusc shells increased. The insects were mostly of the Orthoptera group (in nymphal stage). In one case, one egg case of a spider was also found. At the fledgling stage a few soft rice grains could be traced in some cases. Stone chips were still present but gradually their number was reduced in all the stomachs of the developed nestling. The mollusc shells were of two types, Gastropoda and Pelecypoda.

In the non-breeding adults (collected in October from rice cultivation), the stomach-contents consisted mostly of rice grains together with 2 or 3 stone chips in each stomach. In a very few cases, insects were also found. The insects were nymph of Jassids, Hemipterous nymphs and Lepidoptera larvae which were associated with the paddy ear-heads and seemed to have been accidentally swallowed. The stomach-contents of the male bird during the breeding season were mostly rice grains, a little amount of insect fragments, few stone-chips and mollusc shells. In one case the number of pebbles was fifteen.

Breeding female : Same as breeding male. In some cases, mostly weed seeds were found, perhaps for feeding new born chicks.

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